

CRYSTAL LAKE

INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS

Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council

May 26, 2004

BASIC FACTS

- *Crystal Lake is a natural body of water*
- *It is about 33 acres in area*
- *Classified as a “great pond”*



- Acquired in 1894
- “Great Pond”
Over 10 acres
State owned
- Accessed on
three sides
- Three city-owned
parcels
- 18 direct abutters
and Norwood Ave
complex
- Drains into the
Charles River



Three city-owned parcels:

- Cronin Cove
- Louise Levingston Cove
- Bath House





Swimming in Crystal Lake, c. 1920's

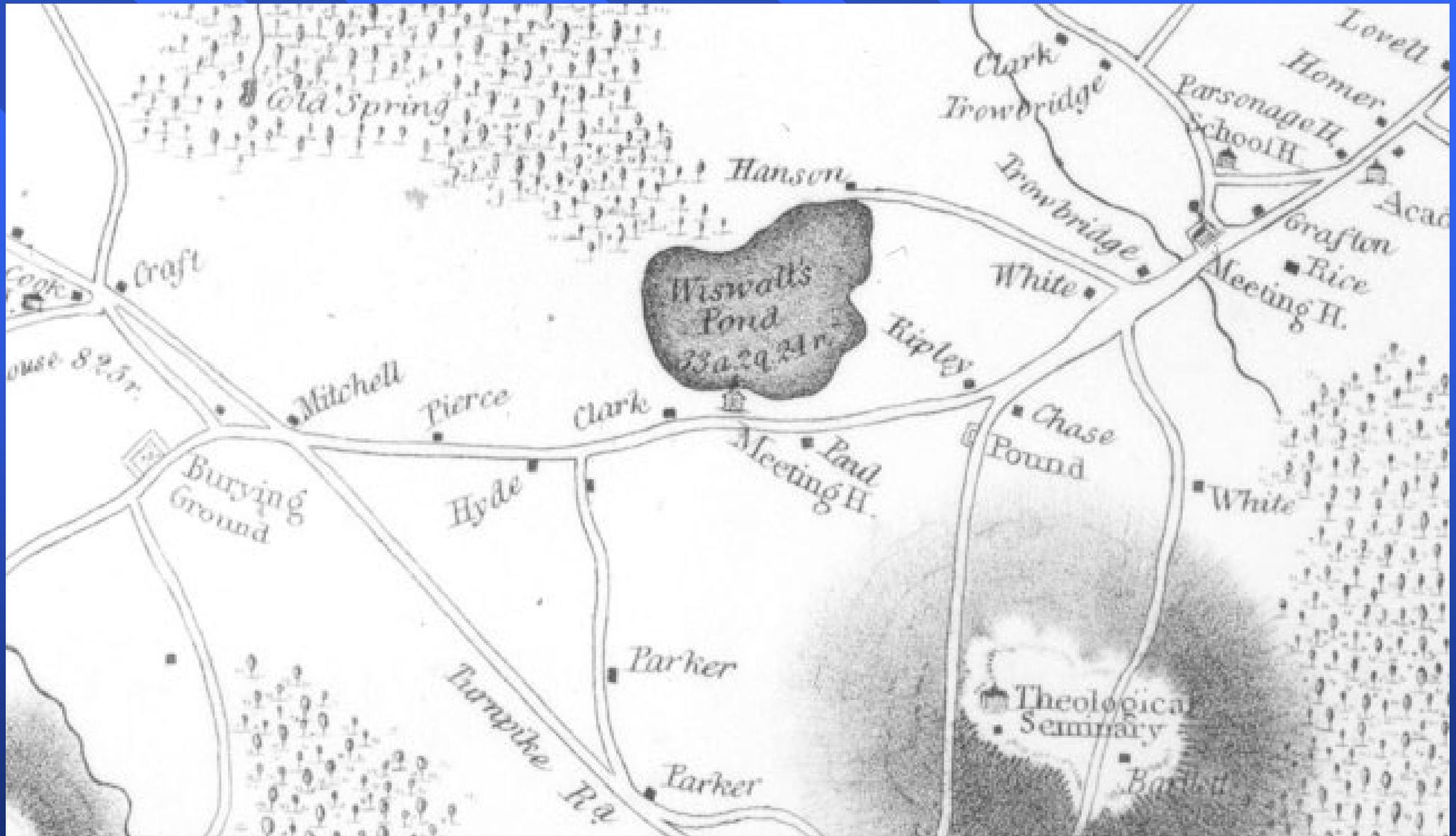
HISTORY of CRYSTAL LAKE

- *Colonial name: Wiswall's Pond*
- *1863: Seawall and gas lights erected at Cronin's Cove*
- *Named "Baptist Pond" in 1880*
 - Newton Centre's First Baptist Church used lake for baptisms*
- *1894: State acquired two parcels (one parcel donated by Moses and Emeline Crane)*

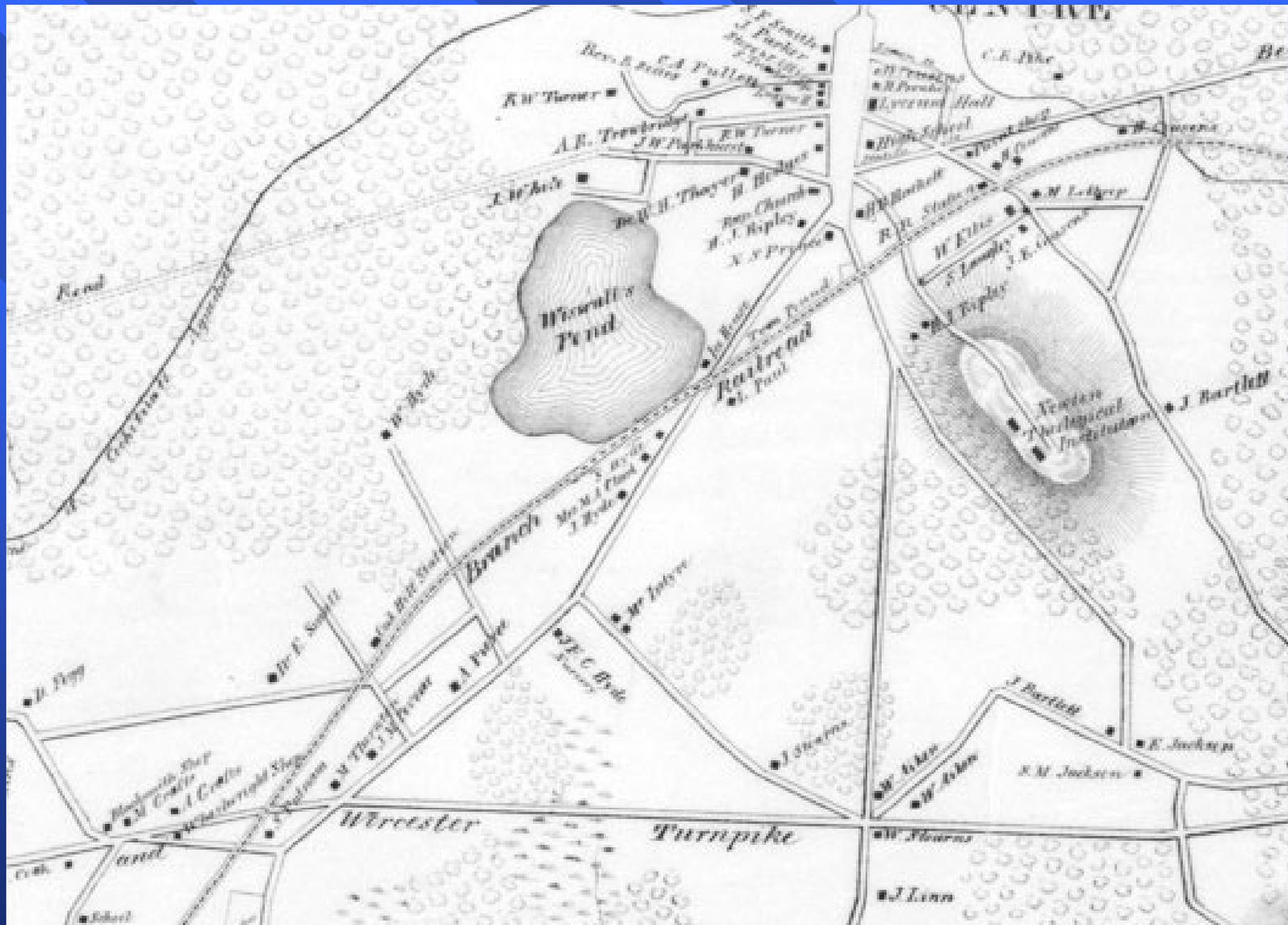
HISTORY of CRYSTAL LAKE

How did Crystal Lake get its name?

- *Wiswall Pond (aka Baptist Pond), along with Bullough's Pond and Chandler Pond, were used for ice harvesting in the 19th century*
- *Ice dealers who sold ice for refrigeration renamed the pond "Crystal Lake"*



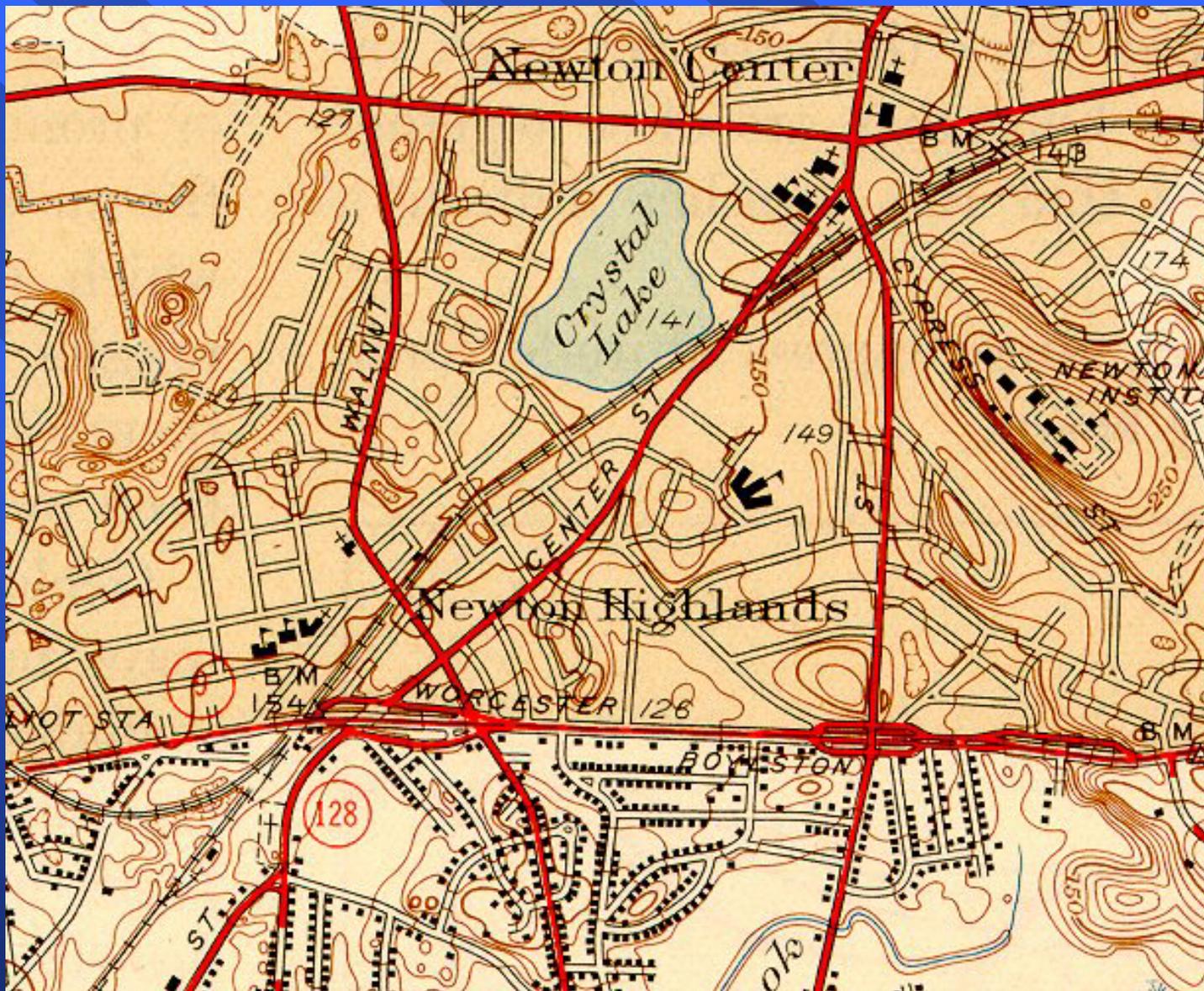
Wiswall's Pond, 1831



Wiswall's Pond, 1855



Crystal Lake, 1897



Crystal Lake, Topographical Map 1946



Swimming in Crystal Lake, c. 2000's

BASIC FACTS

- *Per MA General Laws Chapter 131, Section 45:*

Crystal Lake is required to be open to the public for purposes of “hunting, fishing, and boating”

- *In 1991, the Newton Parks and Recreation Commission was required by the MA Dept of Fisheries and Wildlife to allow public access for boating and fishing*

HISTORY

1924: Special Act

1929: Rules and Regulations, Newton
Playground Commission

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and
and Fishing on Crystal Lake

HISTORY

The Act of 1924, Chapter 243:

“An Act Relative to the Control of Crystal Lake
in the City of Newton”

- City’s Playground Commission (now the Parks and Recreation Commission) can make rules and regulations governing fishing, boating, bathing, skating, and other recreational activities on Crystal Lake

HISTORY

The Act of 1924, Chapter 243:

“An Act Relative to the Control of Crystal Lake
in the City of Newton”

- Enforcement: any police officer may patrol lake and shall have authority to arrest any person violating any rule or regulation established under this Act
- Fine “not more than twenty dollars”

HISTORY

1929: City of Newton Playground Commission Rules and Regulations for the Government and Use of Crystal Lake

- Rule #1: No person shall enter or leave Crystal Lake except at beaches where the City owns the land, or at other designated places
- All inhabitants have equal rights, subject to payment of charges fixed under these rules
- Exception for abutters, their guests and servants on their own respective beaches

HISTORY

1929: City of Newton Playground Commission Rules and Regulations for the Government and Use of Crystal Lake

- Rule #8: Bathing is limited to “ticket holders”
- Rule #12: All bathers must use facilities provided by City of Newton
- Rule #13: No person shall bathe except in proper costume, and at designated place, or bathe in any other seasons or hours than are posted at designated beach

HISTORY

1929: City of Newton Playground Commission
Rules and Regulations for the Government
and Use of Crystal Lake

- May not “annoy another person”
- May not “utter profane or threatening language”
- May not “drink liquor or play any game of chance”
- May not “lie down or go to sleep on a bench or boat”
- May not “play any musical instrument”

HISTORY

1929: City of Newton Playground Commission Rules and Regulations for the Government and Use of Crystal Lake

- Bathing until 6 PM is restricted to children and to parents or guardians having young people in their charge.
- After 6 PM, older people may bathe, subject to using the bathhouse for dressing, showers before entering the lake, and a time limit of one hour each day

HISTORY

1929: City of Newton Playground Commission
Rules and Regulations for the Government
and Use of Crystal Lake

Skating:

- Only at place designated by ropes or lanterns
- May skate only on days posted
- May not skate when skating forbidden
- May not play hockey except in specially marked areas



Ice Skating at Auburndale Cove, 2004

HISTORY

Skating:

- Currently allowed ONLY in Auburndale Cove
- Newton Parks & Rec Dept chose to funnel limited resources to one area that can be properly lighted, with heated skating house and supervised

HISTORY

1929: City of Newton Playground Commission
Rules and Regulations for the Government
and Use of Crystal Lake

- Boating: must obtain written permit from the Newton Playground Commission
- Boat may not exceed 8 miles per hour
- Fishing: no fishing allowed from Dec 1 to June 30

HISTORY

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement)

- Allow access to Crystal Lake for boating and fishing
- Access point is Cronin Cove (Lake Ave.)
- Abutters may launch boats from own property
- Swimming from boats is prohibited
- Supercedes any inconsistent rules from 1929

HISTORY

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement)

- Boats permitted: car top boats, canoes, kayaks, rowboats, wind surfers, inflatable boats (carrying capacity > 300 lbs.)
- Motors: only electric motors not exceeding 3 horsepower or 30 pounds of thrust
- Prohibit jet skis, crew sculls, water skiing, internal combustion engines

HISTORY

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement)

- Boats may not be landed on private property, except for abutters landing on their own property
- May not moor boat after dusk, or to interfere with access point
- Maximum number of boats in lake limited to 20

HISTORY

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement)

- All boats must be equipped with personal flotation device for each person on board, worn at all times
- May not exceed carrying capacity of boat
- No person under age 12 shall operate boat unaccompanied
- Swimming from boats is prohibited
- Boating not allowed in buoyed swimming area, or near aerator, or within 150 feet from the bathing beach

HISTORY

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement)

- Fishing: all who fish from boats must have valid license
- Scuba fishing and spear fishing are prohibited
- Ice fishing is prohibited when ice is determined unsafe for skating
- Ice fishing is prohibited in areas planned for skating

HISTORY

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement)

- No littering
- No stone throwing, firecrackers, etc. in public/private lands surrounding Crystal Lake
- No gambling, drug use, or obscene language
- No alcoholic beverages
- No throwing of cigarettes, matches, and no fires or grilling on public lands or in boats

ENFORCEMENT

1991: Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement)

- City of Newton Police and Newton Parks and Recreation Officials shall enforce these rules
- Violations subject to \$50 fine, payable to City of Newton
- State Laws enforced by Director of Division of Law Enforcement of Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement, Environmental Police Officers, and State Police, which may include \$50 fine

SWIMMING AT CRYSTAL LAKE -2004

- Season swim permits (only for Newton residents)
 - Adults (\$45), Students (ages 6-18)(\$20)
 - Summer pass valid at Crystal Lake and Gath Pool
- Daily swim permit: \$6 (adult), \$4 (student), \$10 (nonresident)
- Lessons (2 wks): \$45 and \$55 (with and without membership)
- Entry and exit: must sign at bathhouse if under 18
- Proper bathing attire is necessary (no street clothes)
- Swim test: children must pass test to swim in deep area
- No diapers, snorkels, fins, masks, inner tubes, inflated toys
- No beach chairs, umbrellas, baby carriages, blankets, or glass
- No dogs, food, drink, alcohol, or drugs, ball games, jumping
- Season - Pre: 6/14, Regular: 6/28, Post: 8/20-8/29
- Hours: Weekdays 10:30 - dusk, Weekends 1:00 - dusk

CRYSTAL LAKE: Questions & Answers

- What access must be provided to Crystal Lake?

- Crystal Lake is a “great pond” and it:

“shall be public for the purpose of hunting or boating and shall be open to all inhabitants of the commonwealth for fishing purposes. All persons shall be allowed reasonable means of access to such points for the purposes aforesaid.”

CRYSTAL LAKE: Questions & Answers

- Where are the City-owned access points?
 - Cronin Cove (Lake Avenue)
 - Levingston Cove (Lake Avenue)
 - Bath House

CRYSTAL LAKE: Questions & Answers

- Who regulates swimming & boating on Crystal Lake?
- The Parks and Recreation Commission (not Dept) has sole authority to regulate the use of Crystal Lake for swimming, boating, and fishing (Chapter 243, 1924)

“The Parks and Recreation Commission may from time to time make rules and regulations governing fishing, boating, bathing, skating, and other recreational activities on Crystal Lake”

CRYSTAL LAKE: Questions & Answers

- Can a person enter Crystal Lake from wherever he or she wishes for boating?
- No: for boating the 1991 rules state access is limited to Cronin Cove

“All boats must be put in the water by hand at the designated area on Cronin Cove. Boats may not be put in the lake from any other site, except for boats belonging to owners of property abutting the lake, which may be launched from the abutter’s property.”

CRYSTAL LAKE: Questions & Answers

- Can a person enter Crystal Lake from wherever he or she wishes for swimming?
- No: for swimming, the 1929 rules state:

“No person shall enter or leave Crystal Lake except at beaches where the City owns the land or at such other places as the Parks and Recreation Commission may specially designate.”

“(the Commission) may regulate access, season, days, and hours for swimming (Rules #8-13). Swimming is limited to ticket holders, but tickets are available to all inhabitants of the Commonwealth”

CRYSTAL LAKE: Questions & Answers

- Can the City prohibit all motorized access?
- No: electric motors are allowed but not exceeding 3 horsepower or 30 pounds of thrust

“The Rules and Regulations for Boating and Fishing (1991) prohibit internal combustion engines. However, the Division of Law Enforcement of the Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement has ruled that cities and towns cannot prohibit all motorized access, thus allowing unobtrusive and non-polluting engines.”